Boram Lee

19, Sept. 2009

English 11F

Ms. Jacob

Who invited you to my Mac-Book?

Have you ever felt that somebody was watching you 24/7? Who wants to be placed under the strict watch everyday, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute, especially in the place where you consider “home?” KIS is not simply a high school; it is also our “home,” a place where we spend most of our time studying and to experiencing the society with other students and teachers. In order to stay together and develop, students should have trust between one another and the school. However, KIS does not reach to the students in motherly way, but by monitoring what we do on our computers as if we are criminals who need to be watched. So, here’s the controversial issue happening at school: KIS began to check students’ screens through Mac-book desktops by monitoring applications and histories. Where did our privacy go? KIS should stop restraining students’ freedom by doing such acts because it not only violates students’ privacies, but also underestimates students’ abilities to focus well in class.

There are various reasons why KIS should stop spying on students’ computers. First, students are citizens and human beings. We have our own privacy. Of course, many adults believe that high school students are not yet mature enough to be respected with their privacy. However, does being young justify the fact that KIS can spy on us? Two weeks ago, student A received her Internet history from the school administrator. They screenshot her chatting with other friends, printed it out, and read the context. What happened next? They make a trespass on her privacy. Don’t get me wrong here. I’m not saying she has no responsibility for what she has done during class. It was not a great decision for her to make while she could have made a better choice of paying attention during class. What’s important is that what the school did to her was much more impolite to violate her own privacy. Even though we are young, we are people and we have the rights to keep our privacies only to ourselves. We are human who are educated to differentiate between what is right and wrong; taking screenshots of students’ histories and spying on their personal lives are not what we consider ‘moral.’ These days, I find myself scared to check my email account while I use the school’s wireless Internet. Who would want to show their personal emails to strangers in the Mac-book office? Emails and other data on students’ computers are highly personal. If they were for everyone to look, why didn’t we just publicize them on public blogs? Why would we make such things as accounts and passwords? How can the strangers in IT office possibly invade students’ privacies? Even my parents don’t do that. Although the school has the right to manage students, they have no rights to invade our privacy.

Secondly, KIS claims that the reason for applying Apple Remote Desktop program on the students is to keep them focused on school works. It is true that some students tend to drift off to other things during class. It is also common sense that we need to concentrate during class and I’m sure many of us heard adults regret their mistakes of not staying focused during school in their past school years. However, it was their choice to not study and if they regret now, sorry for them. Unlike those who regret, KIS students desire to go to good colleges and if they want to play around with computer during class, we should count that as their decision. Their poor decisions will portray through Powerschool. However, most of the students know how to study and work by themselves to achieve what they want for the future; dreaming of getting accepted to the college they want to get into. Wise students know when they need to concentrate because students are young ADULTS. Does everyone fail in classes? No. Whether KIS monitors us or not, not all students fail to perform well in their classes. If a student decides to fail in a class, it is their decision to do so. We should be the ones who map our future. There is no reason for KIS interfere in our lives, at least not by spying our computer screens.

Thirdly, who needs extra monitoring when we are already under enough? There are cameras on the main door every floor, and at every end of the hallway. Who can’t realize the cameras placed on the main door and on every floor? Has the role of the school changed into a way of jailing students? Who would want to feel that they are in the jail when they are at home? Jail and home don’t even match together! Don’t we come to school to get advanced education and learn how to interact with other people around us? KIS monitors all students in the building as Big Brother from 1964 by George Orwell spies on the people. How outrageous is this situation? Are we living in a socialistic country? I don’t think KIS does what they should do as a school.

The school is the place to feel comfortable and a place to study in order to become a better person and to step out into the harsh society waiting for us. KIS should stop monitoring students’ Mac-book desktops. It might be fun to watch others’ private lives, but this is an invasion of one’s own privacy and this is a serious problem. We are not movie stars who give up their privacies to become famous. We are students who study at school and who have the rights to keep our privacy to ourselves. These issues of privacy need to be addressed. Therefore, KIS should stop monitoring students at school because they are violating our privacy. Now, how does it feel thinking that your Mac-Book is being watched even at this moment? Would you say it is right for the school to do so?